

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 remain in this application. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

The informalities in claim 7 referred to on page 2 of the Office Action are eliminated above. The term "energization" as used in claim 7 has not been modified in the manner suggested by the Examiner, however, since heater energization is executed for a specified time when the specified heater energization conditions are satisfied as recited in claim 7.

The allowance of claims 3 and 5 is acknowledged with appreciation. The indication that claims 6 and 7 contain allowable subject matter is also acknowledged with appreciation; claims 6 and 7 are rewritten in independent form above and should be allowable.

Claims 8-10 are amended above and now depend on allowed claim 3. Claims 8-10, therefore, should be allowable for the same reasons as claim 3, and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) set forth on pages 3-4 of the Office Action is moot.

Claims 1, 2, and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by published Japanese patent application 07-139455 to Hajima et al. Reconsideration is requested. Referring by way of example only, without intending to limit the scope of the invention, to the illustrated embodiments of the invention, as presently defined by claim 1, main air control valves 16 for a

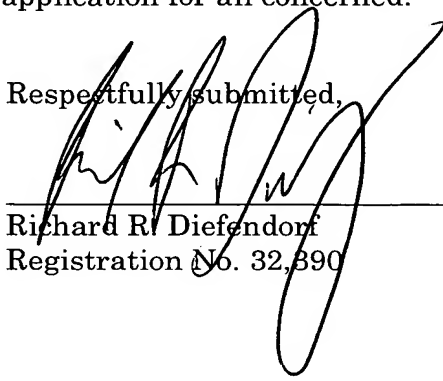
main air passage 3 are provided near intake ports 10 in respective pipes 3a of the intake manifold, and a throttle valve 8 is provided upstream of the intake manifold in the main air passage. The throttle valve 8 is used as a conventional air flow rate control valve, while the main air control valves 16, on the other hand, are used, particularly at the time of start-up cranking, to prevent a deterioration in internal combustion engine "startability" (see, for example, that portion of the originally filed specification appearing from line 25 on page 20 to line 10 on page 25). According to the present invention, when the cranking represented in Figure 2(a) begins, the main air control valves 16, shown in Figure 2(b), are closed so that no air remaining downstream of the throttle valve 8 will enter the engine from the main passage 3 as shown in Figure 2(c). Instead, air is let into the bypass passage 4 with the heater, as shown in Figure 2(d). The Hajima et al. throttle valve 13 is provided upstream of the intake manifold 2 in a main air passage, but does not have main air control valves for the main air passage as presently required by claim 1. More particularly, in the Hajima et al. device, there is no suggestion of main air control valves for a main air passage provided near intake ports in respective pipes of an intake manifold as currently amended claim 1 defines. Claim 1, therefore, is not anticipated by the Hajima et al. publication.

It is respectfully submitted that claim 1 as it appears above is patentable for the reasons discussed. Claims 2 and 4 depend on claim 1 and are considered patentable as well. All claims in this application, therefore, should now be patentable.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

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